

Shotteswell Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7.33 pm on Tuesday 10th May 2022 at the Village Hall, Shotteswell.

Present were: Cllrs Faulkner (Chair), J Burgess, V Ingram (Clerk), B Zammatt, Cllr Mills (WCC), Cllr Feilding (SDC) (Cllr Mills left the meeting at 8.11 pm)

Apologies: Cllr Pearson

Members of the Public: 2

Declaration of Interest: None

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Cllr Burgess and Seconded by Cllr Zammatt.

Matters Arising

Highways & Trees:

The damaged 20's plenty replacement sign had been ordered, awaiting delivery.

No parking sign for the passing bay had been delivered and needs to be put in place, Cllr Faulkner to install.

Potholes in New Road and Second Turn had been reported.

Middle Lane a temporary patch had been made but will be fully repaired when the resurfacing takes place.

Snuff Lane resurfacing remains in abeyance until the undergrounding of the Electricity is completed.

The expected road closure notices had been rejected by WCC and new dates are now anticipated for after June.

The focus had been to try and get Bakehouse Lane sorted, mainly the broken drains but also, the significant water leak. The parish council had been liaising with the insurance company, the County Council and STW. Unfortunately, despite getting STW to inspect the works last week the works failed and so remedial work was to take place on the 9th & 10th of May. This has been escalated to a priority to stop the water from being wasted.

Works to repair the drains are scheduled to take place, the Clerk had mapped the drains with each fault and WCC had agreed to the works.

The Clerk had contacted BT regarding getting the old electricity poles removed from the Back Hill area. As a result, an engineer had been out to do a survey.

Complaints had been received regarding the verges being cut with No-Mow May, the thoughts being that these should be allowed to flourish to encourage wildlife. The council accepted that a strip had to be cut by the roadside and for any visibility purposes, but that the rest should remain. The County Council had been contacted regarding this matter.

Playing Field:

The new book had been purchased and was in circulation, Cllr Faulkner to do the next month.

RoSPA inspection booked. The contractor had been asked to make sure the field is cut ready for both the Jubilee and fete dates.

The contractor had been asked to assess damage to the treehouse awaiting an estimate.

Cllr Faulkner had sprayed around the equipment to prevent strimmer damage.

Repairs had been made to the skier, the children's swing seat and repair to the goal post. Thatch for parasols needed to be put up before the Jubilee weekend, Cllr Faulkner to arrange.

The large bonfire had been lit, but a beacon for the 2nd June needs to be built, Cllr Faulkner to find pallets.

Dog fouling & Fly Tipping

Dog fouling is still prevalent on footpaths leading to the Falcon and on the Green.

Fly-tipping had been very much on the increase, all reported to SDC, but of late, not as prompt as normal collecting. Flytipping reported by Mollington fly over, but this is Oxfordshires territory.

Green food caddies had been delivered but a few properties were missed, these were reported by the Clerk and the missed bins should be delivered shortly. A lot of detail went into the Chairman's report of the changes for August along with the new collection dates to try and help villagers.

Jubilee

Committee had been formed and progressing well. Fundraisers had been held towards the event and raised £1,946.50 it was felt that there was very good support from villagers. There are two events planned on Thursday and Sunday. A request had been made for a donation towards buying a commemorative gift for the children it was estimated that this would be in the region of £115, this was proposed by Cllr Faulkner, Seconded by Cllr Burgess. Commemorative trees would be planted in the Autumn as the optimum time.

New Road: The Clerk had been given to understand that Orbit was now in a position to agree on the final contract. The proviso would be with the caveat that if ever the land was needed for an access road Orbit would be entitled to payment. The council also formally agreed to appoint a solicitor to act on their behalf. Proposed by Cllr Burgess Seconded by Cllr Faulkner. Nothing further regarding garages at the moment with the proposal to install electric charging points

Finance:

The end of the year financial documents and procedures were formally accepted and approved by the council. Proposed by Cllr Faulkner Seconded by Cllr Zammett.

Paid since last meeting

Wicksteed £996.96	Printing £165
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Proposed by Cllr Burgess and Seconded by Cllr Faulkner.

Next meeting arranged for 12th July

County Councillor Report

Papyrus Prevention of Young Suicide in Warwickshire

With funding awarded to Papyrus from Warwickshire Covid-19 Mental Wellbeing and Resilience Fund Papyrus is working County Wide across Warwickshire to create "suicide-safer" communities.

Aims: to understand the prevalence and impact of suicide

To explore the language, and challenges, when talking openly about suicide

To recognise the "signs" that may indicate someone is having second thoughts of suicide

To consider how we can all contribute to a suicide-safer community.

Available dates to book your place:

13 th May, 7 th June, 23 rd June and 14 th July.

For enquiries Contact: westmidlands@papyrus.uk.org

Become a Loneliness Ambassador-Warwickshire County Council

The Council is looking for people who can help those who are lonely and isolated

Visit: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/health-wellbeing/become-loneliness-ambassador>

Fraudsters target pre-payment meter customers and other scam alerts

Fraudsters Target pre-payment Meter customers

Cold callers are offering Marriage allowance Tax Rebates, for a percentage of any money gained. The callers ask residents for their National Insurance numbers and ask them to sign agreements. Residents have reported that they are being chased for hundreds of pounds

For more information visit <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2022/04/fake-council-tax-energy-rebate-scam-targeting-households/>

Energy rebate scheme

Fake Ukraine Fundraisers

Action Fraud has received 196 reports about FAKE e-mails purporting to raise money for those affected by the crisis in Ukraine.

For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulators-urge-safe-giving-to-support-ukraine>

Welfare Scheme

Sudden unexpected costs can create real challenges for people experiencing financial hardship. If this is you or anyone you know, help is available. www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme

If you are self-isolating or at higher risk to COVID-19, you can access help from the council and partners.

Wellbeing Support

For practical and wellbeing support go call the hotline 0800 408 1447 or go to www.warwickshire.gov.uk/coronavirusvulnerable

The Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme supports the most vulnerable residents at times of unavoidable crisis when they have no other means of help. The scheme provides basic and essential help for food and energy in the form of emergency food parcels or credit for energy. Call 0800 408 1448.

If you're finding it hard to feed your family help and advice is online

at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/foodsupport and www.warwickshire.gov.uk/foodbanks

District Council Report

On the 25 April SDC held our Council meeting. I asked 2 questions on planning matters and received the following answers which I hope are of interest.

1. Councillor Feilding will ask:

Like all good intentions that are based around computer modelling, nature can throw a spanner in the works. Having observed all the changes and the consequence of rushed legislation, I abstained on Stratford-on-Avon District Council's vote on the Climate Change Emergency, as there were still too many unknowns, and the legislation has not caught up. Are we in limbo?

We are now running to catch up on the conditions imposed by the 2008 Act. Although a great deal has been done to improve and encourage better insulation in properties, many homeowners find it expensive and time consuming to deal with.

There are problems due to our Core Strategy and the NPPF. They need to be updated to deal with air and ground source pumps and solar panels and tiles, particularly on Grade 2 listed buildings.

What is being planned to update and ease the problems for homeowners who want to comply to Policies CS 2, 3 and 8?

Councillor Pemberton (Portfolio Holder for Place and Economy and Deputy Leader of the Council) will respond as follows:

I thank Councillor Feilding for the question. Adapting historic buildings to meet the threat of climate change is challenging, especially striking the right balance between the need to address the climate emergency and preventing harm to the historic asset.

Councillor Feilding identifies two issues; the first is that the Core Strategy is not as strong as we would like, in respect of tackling climate change. We acknowledge that and published supplementary planning guidance in July 2020 to assist in this. We are also preparing a new local plan that will have climate change at its heart.

That is, however, a separate issue to the challenges faced by homeowners per se. I am aware that Historic England have published guidance (Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings | Historic England) about how energy efficiency measures and retrofitting can best be achieved in respect of historic buildings and, whilst this can be challenging as it will often vary on a case by case basis, seeking some pre-application advice with our planning and conservation officers is my recommended way forward.

2. Councillor Feilding will ask:

There is a need to consider the Greenfield and old Farmyards on the edge of villages.

How can old derelict farm buildings, that have been erected using steel frames with asbestos roofing, become part of the landscape, in accordance with the definition of Greenfield, as per the Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Core Strategy and the NPPF.

The old stone and brick buildings are more likely to get planning permission to be developed into homes, as they blend well into the landscape. In many cases they get Grade 2 listing to protect their status.

I would be grateful for your comments on both items? I am particularly interested to hear about lobbying Central Government.

Councillor Pemberton (Portfolio Holder for Place and Economy and Deputy Leader of the Council) will respond as follows:

Agricultural buildings fall within the national definition of greenfield. We are unlikely to be able to change that, although I will happily mention it to Ministers when I meet with them.

We have sought to acknowledge this challenge through our local plan policies such as Policy AS.10. We have the opportunity to revise our approach to farmyards through the review of the local plan and whilst I am aware that Councillor Feilding has raised this informally with officers, I would urge him to do so at the formal consultation stage to ensure that the suggestions can be properly considered. There may also be opportunities for a local approach through the Neighbourhood Development Plan process.

Local Electricity Bill.

Also discussed was the above which we agreed to support. However, I raised the fact that due to the problems in Eastern Europe both Russia and Ukraine, the UK needs to produce fertilizer and grain. This will require greater production of gas and also not to cover good agriculture land with solar panels. The matter of small scale nuclear reactors was raised. Rolls Royce are working on this. They should have a working model by 2024 with main production by 2029.

A motion to support large scale planting of trees was also defeated as we need to produce our own food. Thus, covering good land with trees doesn't help.

JOINT STATEMENT PROPOSED MERGER OF STRATFORD ON AVON AND WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCILS

Following a meeting between Council Leaders and Chief Executive's on 14 April, Cllr Jefferson Leader of Stratford on Avon District Council wrote seeking a delay in the Government's decision on the proposed merger with Warwick District Council to allow for due diligence to be completed. The letter was sent without the agreement of Cllr Day Leader of Warwick District Council, who had been invited to be a co-signatory. It was understood by Cllr Jefferson that in writing to the Government

unilaterally seeking to extend the current period of uncertainty would end the Council merger process.

On 13 December 2021, both Councils formally agreed merger plans and submitted a proposal to Government requesting permission to form a new joint Council by May 2024. In advance of this key political step, Councillors received detailed advice including an independent Financial Impact assessment. This Local Government Association report recommended that a supplementary review was commissioned by Stratford on Avon District Council in relation to a company wholly owned by Warwick District Council. Given that a response from Government was anticipated by the end of May in respect of the merger decision, Cllr Jefferson considered there to be a material risk that the further due diligence work would not be completed in time and if the Minister was minded to support the merger, there would be limited opportunity for Stratford on Avon District Council to withdraw at that point. Cllr Day considered that the decision to merge had been made last December and that ongoing due diligence did not prevent the service integration progressing as planned. To ask Government to delay matters would create further uncertainty for all staff, especially those facing redundancy, and residents seeking assurances about local services. In Cllr Day's opinion making a request for further delay would result in trust being undermined, making it untenable for the two authorities to further integrate services or merge.

The Leaders jointly concluded that the proposed merger cannot go ahead as anticipated. There is a significant difference between the approaches and ambitions of the two councils that have proved to be irreconcilable and this means that a joint request, subject to Council approval, will now be made to the Government to stop the merger process. Recommendations will be made to an Extraordinary meeting of Stratford DC, and the AGM at Warwick DC on 11 May 2022.

This is a disappointing outcome but it should not mean the end for the positives that this process has generated; we have learned a lot and wish to carry on as good partners. It is anticipated that some of the joint working arrangements already put in place will continue, such as legal services and business rates collection. However, others including the Joint Management Team and the service integration programme will end. Each council will continue to keep residents, councillors, and staff engaged in the process of updating our working arrangements.

Thank you for the many contributions and the positive commitment made to supporting the future of both councils.

The costs that have been incurred will be part of a report at the next council meeting on 11th.